



COMMISSION ON AGING

COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING

Minutes
August 22, 2016

PRESIDING: Sharonlee Vogel, Chair

Members Attending

Jennifer Asher
Reg Avery
Angie Boyter
Barbara Catlin
Debbie Fleischmann
Jan Horan
Julia Mattis
Andrew Monjan
Eletta Morse
S.K. Shin

Not Present

Peter Brunner
Susan Hailman
Bob McLaughlin
Michael Willis

Office on Aging and Independence

Peggy Hoffman

Howard County Police Department

Andre Lingham

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

Approve Agenda

Reg Avery moved to accept the agenda, and Julia Mattis seconded the motion. Motion was approved. *All in favor. Agenda accepted.*

Approve Minutes

Eletta Morse moved to accept the amended minutes of the previous meeting, and Jennifer Asher seconded the motion. Motion was approved. *All in favor. Minutes accepted.*

Korean American Senior Association (KASA)

Program Director Young R. Smith and members of KASA attended to provide the Commission with an overview of their programs and services.

KASA is a nonprofit, founded in 2002 which “empowers Korean American through educational programs that enable them to utilize community resources for quality living and the promotion of health and wellness.” KASA programming primarily takes place at Kahler Hall in Columbia and at the Bain Center. Additionally Korean lunches are served at the Bain center on the second and fourth Mondays of each month with average attendance being close to 200.

In addition to language, dance, and exercise classes, KASA also established community partnerships to offer a range of services to the Korean community. Partnerships with AARP have resulted in a driver safety program. KASA also offers biannual medical seminars, a walking program at Centennial park, education on the election process and voter registration assistance, and help with citizenship applications.

KASA does face several barriers in providing service. High attendance means meeting space is at a premium and it’s easy to fill to capacity. Limited transportation options, language barriers, and a volunteer staff provide challenges to programming and outreach.

KASA also extended an invite to the Commission to attend their Korean Thanksgiving Festival on September 10, from 10am-3pm at the Bain Center.

Economic Security Initiative

The Office on Aging and Independence is one of five aging organizations in Maryland participating in this effort, led by the National Council on Aging. The goal is to create a virtual “economic security center” using a no wrong door approach to serving older adults through community resource mapping, establishing key community partnerships and conducting personalized comprehensive economic assessments. The grant runs through January 2017.

The Office is marketing for interested individuals; at this time, referrals are coming through MAP, Department of Social Services, Community Action Council, Meals on Wheels and targeted outreach efforts. Staff have found that while consumers seems interested in the program there is a lack of follow through with applying.

If interested in participating, people can contact the program through MAP.

Committee Reports

Caregiving

The Caregiving Committee will meet next week and have a report at the next meeting.

Government Relations

S.K. Shin reminded the Commission of the Howard County Senior Ride, LLC program he presented on last month. Bob McLaughlin found a federal grant that could help get the program off the ground and would like to know if the county applied.

Health and Wellness

Andrew Monjan reported that the Committee began by discussing the issues and initiatives from the Health Aging Workgroup of the LHIC. One concern that came up regarded the overuse of medication and the importance of reviewing your medications regularly. It was suggested that the Office could design a flyer for distribution in the centers on this topic. Other suggestions included promoting existing health and wellness

resources, promoting increased socialization/engagement, and promoting exercise opportunities, especially those that take place outdoors.

Budget and Policy

Sharonlee shared that the recommended changes to the Livable Homes Tax credit have begun moving up the chain in the county's process, but stressed patience as the flood has slowed things down considerably.

Housing and Aging in Place

The Committee met with Mary Becker from the Office on Aging and Independence to discuss the barriers to aging in the community. The top issue identified was the deficit of accessible and affordable housing. Additionally many residents indicate that they plan to stay in their homes, but fail to plan for the accommodations that will require; most Loan Closet clients are in immediate need, not planning ahead.

The Committee also discussed the potential for using a county owned property as a model home for accessibility; the Loan Closet could be co-located in the space.

50+EXPO

Andrew Monjan shared signup sheets for the Commission's booth at the 50+EXPO and will send out reminder emails in mid-October. Andrew is accepting suggestions for revisions to the COA brochure as well as for flyers/handouts.

Howard County Police Department

Andre Lingham shared that the Police Department has been very involved in the aftermath of the flooding in Ellicott City where the biggest issue has been sightseers trying to get a look at Main Street. Contrary to some reports there has been no widespread looting of the site.

Crime stats for the past month show a small increase in burglaries due to 100 storage units being broken into. Each unit is counted as its own crime which has driven up numbers. Similar thefts have happened in neighboring jurisdictions.

Office on Aging Report

Jennie Rittenhouse reported that the Office and Department are involved in the flood recovery effort through the Disaster Assistance Center, which has been open daily since the August 1. The center is designed to bring together local and state resources for those displaced in a one-stop-shop.

Peggy Hoffman is serving on the Flood Recovery Committee which is working to determine how collected monetary donations will be disbursed. As more information is available, it will be shared.

Chair's Report

Sharonlee Vogel reported that no one had volunteered for a nominating committee, but that Eletta Morse had volunteered to service as vice chair. Jennifer Asher nominated Eletta Morse for vice chair and Debbie Fleischmann seconded the nomination. All were in favor.

The MDCOA symposium will be held September 22 at the North Laurel 50+ Center. Andrew Monjan and Eletta Morse will be attending. Sharonlee has requested permission for additional COA members to attend as more Commissioners were interested. Sharonlee will coordinate a waiting list; email her directly if interested in attending.

Senior Issues Heard (Sharing from Commissioners)

Reg Avery reminded everyone that Columbia Association is evaluating their stock of buildings and facilities as some need major repairs. Seniors need to be vocal about what they'd like to see; now is the time to write or get out and advocate.

Angie Boyter learned about induction loops to help those with hearing issues and recommended they be included in county buildings.

Jennifer Asher shared information about the Freebird Club a site similar to AirBnB but focused on clientele over 50. The project is just getting off the ground and hopes to be up and running this month. The website is freebirdclub.net.

Barbara Catlin reminded everyone that if you're living alone it's a good idea to check in with someone daily.

Jan Horan volunteered at Senior Day at the Fair and reported attendance seemed lower than in the past. She also visited Longwood 50+ Center, which is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays to see their programming.

Debbie Fleischmann shared information about a grant the hospital has received to aid their goal of reducing readmissions. Key personnel for the Community Care team have been brought on board and this winter a new initiative will push instructions and other care information directly to a mobile phone or tablet. This information should be valuable to caregivers as well-with a patient's permission, instructions and other information can be shared with a caregiver.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

Reg Avery motioned to adjourn. Angie Boyter seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Recording Secretary: Jennifer Rittenhouse

Next Meeting: September 26, Glenwood 50+ Center at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center, 7pm